

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the amendments above and the remarks following is respectfully requested.

Claims 13-15, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 59, 69, 72-74, 83, 85, 93, 96-103, 116-118, 212, 220, 221, 226, and 227 are currently pending.

Claims 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 69, 72-74, and 96-97 are objected to for formal reasons.

Claims 13-15, 26, 28, 29, 97, 212, and 227 are rejected under § 102(b).

Claims 25, 32, 69, 72-74, and 96 are objected to but deemed to contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 59, 83, 85, 93, 98-103, 116-118, 220, 221, and 226 are deemed allowable over the prior art of record.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to Claims 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 69, 72-74, and 96-97 because they contained various informalities. Accordingly, Applicant has amended these claims such that appropriate corrections have been made thereto. It may be noted that these amendments are merely cosmetic and do not change the scope of the claims. It is believed that this will overcome the objections of the Examiner with regard to these claims.

Claims Rejections under 35 USC § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 13-15, 26, 28, 29, 97, 212, and 227 under 35 USC § 102 (b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,725,341 to Hofmeister. On consideration of this rejection, Applicant has elected to cancel these claims.

Applicant has noted the Examiner's request to provide a list of all copending applications that set forth similar subject matter as recited in the present claims. Accordingly, we enclose the following list of all such copending applications: U.S. Patent Applications Nos. 10/561,124 filed on June 15, 2006; 11/785,757 filed on April 19, 2007; 11/042,546 filed on January 24, 2005 and 10/182,352 filed on March 17, 2003.

All issues raised by the Examiner have been dealt with. In view of the above amendments and the discussion above, Applicant submits that Claims 25, 32, 59, 69, 72-74, 83, 85, 93, 96, 98-103, 116-118, 220, 221, and 226 are in condition for allowance. A prompt Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Encl.:

Petition for Extension (1 Month)